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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2711
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHVJ/AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO PRIORITY 0093

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 001512

SIPDIS

DEPT ALSO FOR EUR/SE AND EUR/SCE (FOOKS AND STINCHCOMB)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/11/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [GR](#) [BK](#) [EU](#)

SUBJECT: GREECE WORRIED ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN BOSNIA

REF: A. STATE 113894

[1](#)B. ATHENS 1495

Classified By: A/Political Counselor Jeff Hovenier for 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) A/Political Counselor met 11/4 with Dimitris Tsoungas, Deputy Director of the MFA A3 Balkans Directorate, to follow-up on ref A points on engaging the EU on Bosnia. The points had previously been delivered to Tsoungas and the MFA's EU Correspondent to inform Greek preparations for the EU GAERC (ref B). Tsoungas said Greece shared U.S. concerns about trends in Bosnia. Greece's highest priority is "the building of the state." The international community needs to help Bosnia develop permanent state structures so that Bosnia can be "weaned" from the international community. Greece firmly supports High Representative Lajcak and believes his primary responsibility must be to work on the development and consolidation of these permanent structures at the state level. Greece rejects any efforts to delegitimize and undermine the Bosnian state, and is, therefore, concerned by RS Prime Minister Dodik's recent activities. However, Greece is also concerned by Bosniak leader Silajdzic's statements which also have not contributed to a positive climate in Bosnia, and Greece finally notes that there are many "anti-State tendencies" among the Bosnian Croats as well. Tsoungas said Greece "has no issues" with the U.S. message that we cannot support renewed constitutional reform discussions until the OHR pre-closure objectives are complete.

[1](#)2. (C) Tsoungas said Greece is willing to consider how the U.S. and EU can coordinate in responding these efforts to weaken the Bosnian state, but that, from Greece's perspective, there must be two elements to this coordination:

-- The Focus: It cannot be solely on the RS and Dodik. Our response must also be directed at the Bosnian Croats and Silajdzic. A/Political Counselor responded that the USG is concerned by Haris Silajdzic's anti-Dayton agenda and is open to further discussions with EU partners on how to respond to efforts to weaken the Bosnian state regardless of where they originate. However, we must also recognize that RS PM Dodik is pursuing a separatist agenda that hinders Bosnia's European perspective.

-- Measures: Tsoungas noted that the U.S. had suggested the EU consider "measures" against RS and RS government officials should they continue to undermine the Bosnian state and provoke a crisis. Greece, in general, "favors carrots over sticks," and Tsoungas inquired what types of "measures" the U.S. had in mind. A/Political Counselor responded that we had no specific measures to suggest. The U.S. has begun a process to review what punitive measures we could take, if necessary. Consistent with our efforts to work closely with the EU on Bosnia, we would seek to coordinate with the EU on this. Such coordination would be most effective if the EU had also already reviewed its options and had a general sense of what was possible/what it thought could be effective.

13. (C) Comment: Although Bosnia has not recently had the same level of attention from the Greek MFA as Kosovo, Serbia, or Macedonia, Tsoungas made clear that the MFA is following developments in Bosnia closely and is concerned by recent trends. Several MFA officials have suggested that the Balkans will be a major focus for the Greek OSCE Chairmanship in 2009; Tsoungas said FM Bakoyannis is following this personally and is looking forward to the upcoming discussion of Bosnia with her EU colleagues. In that light, Tsoungas said Greece would welcome further updates on developments in Bosnia as well as our analysis of what they portend. End Comment.

SPECKHARD